





SPEECH

OF

HON. JOHN A. LOGAN,  
OF ILLINOIS,

ON THE

STATE OF THE UNION.

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES,

FEBRUARY 5, 1861.



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The House having under consideration the report of the Select Committee of thirty-three—Mr. LOGAN said:

MR. SPEAKER: I do not suppose that anything that I may say will have the effect to change the views or determinations of any of the members of this body on the question now under discussion. But representing a constituency—honest, brave and chivalric, at all times obeying strictly the mandates of the Constitution, and who are most deeply interested in the startling drama now in progress—I deem it due to them, that I should give expression to the opinions I entertain in regard to this appalling crisis in our national affairs. Sir, in view of the history of the past, we now have a heart-rending scene before us. During three quarters of a century we have enjoyed unbounded prosperity, and cherished the brightest visions of national greatness, whether in peace or in war, the career of our country has been one of unexampled success. Up to the time of the last Presidential election we were prosperous and happy; abundant crops, accompanied by a great foreign demand, gave the farmer the auspicious assurance of ease and contentment. Never before had so many elements conspired to augment the wealth of the land, as just before that fatal period; but now, a tornado rages, spreading desolation in its path—discord, anarchy, and confusion prevails throughout a portion of our once heaven-blessed country. Our political system is crumbling to pieces, and ourselves verging almost on a state of universal bankruptcy. Stocks are depreciated, all sorts of values depressed, and thousands of poor laborers thrown out of employment on the cold charities of the world. Six of the pillars and supports of our proud Temple of Liberty have been wrenched from their places. Six stars have disappeared from our glorious old flag. Revolution exists in six States, with a chance that it will spread ere long, as a fire on the prairies, over

many more of the slaveholding States. What a sad change, Mr. Speaker, a few short weeks have wrought!

Sir, to what are we to attribute all this? In order to deal properly with this subject, it is necessary for us to inquire into the causes of this sad train of events, involving as they do the dismemberment of this, the best Government ever devised by man, and ascertain, if possible, whether or not there is any remedy that will stay the revolution and repair the disaster. Sir, what is the cause? It does seem to me that no argument is necessary before the honest and intelligent people of this country, to demonstrate the fact that the agitation of the slavery question, by fanatics and demagogues, North and South, in and out of the halls of Congress, for years past, is the source of all our present troubles. The abolitionists of the North have constantly warred upon southern institutions by incessant abuse from the pulpit, from the press, on the stump, and in the halls of Congress, denouncing them as a sin against God and man; they have in many places, by mobs, resisted the execution of the fugitive slave law; they have in several of the northern States, by legislative enactment, made it a penitentiary offence for any one to assist in the arrest or rendition of a fugitive slave. By these denunciations and lawless acts on the part of abolition fanatics, such results have been produced as to drive the people of the southern States to a sleepless vigilance for the protection of their property, and preservation of their rights, whilst the abolitionists of the North have been engaged in their part of the work—poisoning the minds of northern people against southern institutions, and encouraging resistance to the due execution of the laws—ambitious, reckless, and seditious men at the South, of the Rhett and Yancy school of disunionists, have been no less industrious in creating a corresponding hatred to northern people and northern institutions, encouraging and inculcating a spirit of resistance to the authorities of the Government. They have seized upon every lawless act of the abolitionists of the North, and every denunciatory speech against southern institutions made by them in Congress or elsewhere, and presented them to the southern people in such a light as “to fire the southern heart” to such an extent that they were ready, upon the election of any man to the Presidency, who they believed sympathized in any degree whatever with the views, designs, or objects of the abolitionists, in reference to the institution of slavery, to be “precipitated into a revolution.”

The election of Mr. Lincoln was the golden opportunity presented to the disunionists of the South—with whom there has been apparently concert of action on the part of the Garrisons, Wendell Phillips, Giddings, and Beecher school of politicians for years—for the overthrow of this Government. The opportunity was not allowed to pass. They seized upon the deep-seated feeling of ill-will that existed between a portion of the people of the two sections of the Union, and have the country now trembling on the verge of ruin. No man, sir, who is versed in the political



history of this country, having a regard for truth, will, for one moment, contend that there is any other cause for the difficulties under which we now labor, than this miserable agitation of the slavery question. Men, sir, North and South, who love themselves far better than their country, have brought us to this unhappy condition.

Having shown the origin of our troubles in the abolition agitation, the apprehensions that exist in the minds of southern people for the safety of their institutions, it is not necessary for us to inquire further, whether these apprehensions are well-founded or not. The question is—what shall we do to allay them?

Sir, there is a great duty for us to perform to our country and to posterity. Professions of devotion to the Union, and love for the institutions of our country alone, will not save us. We must act, and act soon—act as patriots and not as partisans. Non-action at this time is slow, but certain death. To act, is to live; to stand still, is simply permitting the Government to die.

Mr. Speaker, if this question of slavery had been banished from the halls of Congress years gone by, the people of the slaveholding States allowed to manage it in their own way without interfering with us, and we of the North had attended to our affairs without meddling with that of our neighbors, and permitted the people of the territories, without congressional intervention either for or against slavery, to have decided the question for themselves, and the representatives of the people in Congress had turned their attention to the development of the vast resources of the agricultural, commercial, manufacturing, and all our inexhaustible interest, we would now have peace, order, prosperity, and happiness in our land, instead of revolution, anarchy, confusion, depressed trade and crippled finances. But, sir, the question is not what would have prevented our present calamities, and preserved peace between the sections, but in what way we may restore tranquillity, and bring the American people once more together in the bonds of amity and union.

I propose, then, to notice the position assumed by some gentlemen on the other side of this hall, who pretend to be the leaders of the party soon to undertake the administration of this Government—these are the extreme men of their party. They say they are Union men; that they are determined to preserve it in fact. Sir, how are they going to preserve it? What do they propose to do to save the Union? What are they willing to concede of their extreme views in order to dissipate the apprehensions of their aggressive policy that has already been pleaded as a justification by several of the States for resorting to secession and revolution? What guarantees, assurances, concessions and compromise are they willing to make to preserve the Union? None, sir; none. The restoration of peace, in the bonds of amity and union, can *never* be looked for from such men. My colleague (Mr. LOVEJOY) is going to preserve the Union by enforcing the laws and hanging traitors. This will be refreshing information to the conservative

masses of Illinois to learn that he is at last for executing the laws, and has turned against traitors. If he and his colaborers in the abolition vineyard had but just come to this conclusion some years since, and given their aid to the execution of the fugitive slave law, instead of countenancing its resistance, probably there would be no occasion for his appeal at this time for the enforcement of the laws on a revolting people. But we are told that this is insurrection and rebellion against the authority of the General Government, and therefore *must* be put down! Let me say to gentlemen, that I will go as far as any man in the performance of a constitutional duty to put down rebellion, to suppress insurrection and to enforce the laws; but when we undertake the performance of these duties, let us act in such a manner as will be best calculated to preserve and not destroy the Government, and keep ourselves within the bounds of the Constitution.

It will not do longer to regard this revolt in the seceding States as a mere insurrection or rebellion. Let us not deceive ourselves, but look at things as they really exist. What are the facts?

In six States this rebellion has attained the dignity of successful revolution, in which all their people are engaged, if not directly, they submit to and acquiesce in it. Revolution is then complete. The national authorities are expelled from within their borders; they have declared their independence, and all within their limits acknowledge allegiance to them, and not to the United States Government; they have raised armies, and are fortifying themselves to maintain their position. And, sir, it is to be feared, that, ere long, other States will follow in their wake. How then, sir, are we to execute our laws within the limits of these seceding States? Under our form of Government, our laws can only be enforced by the civil authorities. The military can only be used as a *posse comitatus* to assist in executing judicial process, when resistance to its execution is made. Who will issue writs in the seceding States against those who have set our authority at defiance? Who will call the *posse comitatus* to their aid? We have neither judge or marshal left who acknowledge our authority. Where will our juries come from that are to try those who have trampled our laws under foot when all have participated in the unlawful act? When the fact is demonstrated that our laws cannot be enforced against these people, by the civil authorities, according to the forms of the Constitution, we are answered, that secession is unconstitutional and wrong. Sir, I have always, and do yet, deny the right of secession. There is no warrant for it in the Constitution. It is wrong, it is unlawful, unconstitutional, and should be called by the right name, *revolution*. No good, sir, can result from it, but much mischief may. It is no remedy for any grievance. I hold that all grievances can be much easier redressed inside the Union than out of it. But it is not necessary to argue the question as to whether it is a remedy for anything or not. Six States have committed the act, have declared their independence, forced our civil



authorities into obedience to them, and are now engaged in establishing a separate and independent government, with the intention of opening diplomatic intercourse with foreign powers.

We are told, however, that their action being unconstitutional, it is the duty of the Federal Government to call into requisition the army, the navy, and the military of the non-seceding States, and with them invade the revolting States, and enforce the laws. Sir, can we, by this process, compel them to elect members of Congress, to accept the offices of judge, marshal, postmaster, collector of customs, at the various ports, or perform any other of the various duties, under the Government? No, sir we might possibly have forces enough to subjugate and hold these States as conquered provinces; make them hate but not love us; make them subject to, but not respect our laws. If this method be resorted to on the part of the Government, with a view of coercing States or enforcing the laws, it will be on our part an act of war, and will be so regarded by the civilized world, and we will be forced in such a conflict of arms, to recognize and observe all the laws of war.

Sir, are our hearts sufficiently steeled against our erring brethren to witness all the horrible scenes of such an unnatural strife? For one, sir, my heart sickens at the very thought. They are not our enemies with whom we should be willing to measure swords, but a part of our people. They are our kinsmen, and should be dealt with kindly; their return from their wanderings may be looked for at some future day, if our action shall be tempered with forbearance and moderation; but if you "let slip the dogs of war," never! never!

At the time the treaty of peace between Great Britain and her revolted colonies was signed, I venture to affirm that there was no nation on the face of the earth, with whom our ancestors would not have more willingly united than with the subjects of King George the III—although they were their own flesh and blood. Such had been the bitterness of that great contest—such the animosity which that civil strife had engendered, that our fathers, if the worst had come, would have sought refuge in any alliance rather than with their own unnatural kin.

This great struggle was commenced to vindicate and enforce the laws against a revolted people. The Lord Norths and King Georges were in that day as great sticklers for executing the laws at the point of the bayonet, and preserving the Government by a resort to arms, as are our latter day Republicans. When implored for concessions—when petitioned for guarantees—they responded with bullets and bayonets; *we all know the result*. The now oft-repeated language, "have we a Government?" and then a discussion as to whether concessions can be made to "rebellious subjects," is almost literally copied from the speeches in Parliament at that time. The parallel between the harrangues of the extreme men of the Republican party, to-day, and the speeches in the British Parliament, is too striking not to have arrested the

attention of the reader of history. If, even after the battle of Lexington, the British Government had heeded the counsels of the eloquent Chatham, it is doubtful whether the Revolution would not have been stayed; and instead of the liberties we now enjoy, this country might have been a jewel in the coronet of the British sovereign. Sir, it is easily seen that the enforcement of the laws, at the point of the bayonet, will not cement this Union again, will not make us friends, nor will it settle the slavery question; but the fruits of such an attempt will be, that the first blood shed will operate as a signal for fresh and more extensive slaughter; a dark veil of terror and death will cover our whole land. Those who are now apparently thirsting for the blood of their fellows, will shed a silent tear over the awful scenes of blood, carnage and desolation, with which they will be surrounded; feelings of the deepest horror will be excited in the breasts of those who will not have lost all sense of humanity and christianity, to see our own native land devoted to all the imaginable atrocities of deep-seated revenge; thousands and thousands will fall before the enraged and constantly increasing forces, to rot in one common grave. Ah! sir, then you will have weeping widows, bereaved orphans, mourning fathers, and *disunion forever*. You who are willing to inaugurate this fatal policy, which ensures war, and not peace, when asked why these widows and orphans, why this weeping and mourning, why this carnage, why these rivers of blood, what will be your answers? "We are merely enforcing the laws against our fellow-citizens and kindred." Can it be possible that any of the friends of Mr. Lincoln will attempt a policy that will bring upon this country all the disasters of civil war, when he himself was so conscientious about the spilling of blood in an "unnecessary war," that he opposed his own Government when engaged in war with Mexico, an enemy, and on foreign soil? Surely, surely, they are not serious. If a collision must ensue between this Government and any of our own people, let it come when every other means of settlement has been tried and exhausted; and not then, except when the Government shall be compelled to repel assaults for the protection of its property, flag, and the honor of the country.

Sir, this no compromise war policy of gentlemen is not a proper or practical remedy! We are, then, led to inquire what is the remedy? It is for the representatives here from all sections of the country, be they of whatever politics they may, who love the Union of these States, and desire the peace, happiness, and welfare of the people, to meet on this question as our fathers met—as patriots—and not as partisans; as men who love every ligament and fibre that has bound us together; as men of peace, and not of war; and, in the spirit of concession and compromise, as our Government was established, show by our action, and not professions, that the people of each State, in their persons and property, shall be protected; that we will recognize the equality of the States to the fullest extent, satisfy and appease the apprehensions of the southern people in reference to the safety of their peculiar insti-

tions, sacrifice each a part of their peculiar views in regard to all the questions that are of a disturbing character, striking *dumb* the people of the South by presenting to them such measures of conciliation as they least expect. In this way, sir, we can save the country; it will have the tendency to bind stronger than ever, in bonds of love and affection, the border slaveholding States to the Union, and those States in the extreme South, that have been dragged into the whirlpool of disunion by reckless and ambitious men, ere long, as wandering and erring children, who, having traveled through strange lands, in "by and forbidden paths," and been beaten by the storms of adversity, will return on bended knees, saying, "I come once more to the parental roof for protection." We are told, however, that the time for concession has passed; that no compromise can be made with men who have swords in their hands; and that, if made, would not be accepted by the seceding States. Sir, the golden moment in reference to those States may have passed for the present. When we first met together this session, those States were yet in the Union; if proper concessions and proper measures of conciliation had then been adopted, you would have armed their conservative men with arguments and facts with which they could have gone before their people. Compromise and guarantees in one hand, and the flag of the Union in the other, the smouldering fires of patriotism would then have burst forth and swept disunion from the land. "You knew your duty but ye did it not." Let the past be a warning for the future; let these vacant seats utter their silent but solemn appeal to the members of this House for prompt and efficient action in behalf of the border slave States, and the conservative masses of the seceding ones, who mourn over the dire calamity that has befallen their country; hearken unto the appeal of the Union men on this floor from the South—(thank God there are Union men, and a host of them yet left, in the slaveholding States, who cherish the memory of their Revolutionary sires, born under the flag of the Union, and taught from childhood to love it, appreciating the fact that the protecting hand of this Government has been over them in sunshine and in storm.) They ask you to give them such guarantees as they are entitled to under all the circumstances, and they will go before their people and put disunion to the sword, or make the flag of their country, saturated with blood, their own winding sheet. Can you refuse to do it? *Patriotism, speak!* Ah! sir, has the miserable shackles of party silenced *that voice?*

We are told by some that the platform of the Republican party must be adhered to; that it must not be deviated from; that if it is, they will not be carrying out the doctrine upon which they were elected. (I am glad, sir, that I can say this does not apply to all the members of that party in this House; several of them are coming up to the work nobly, and are willing to let platforms and party all go for the sake of the country.) But it does apply to many who profess to be leaders of the organization; and I fear



that it will turn out in the future that they are its leaders. Is it not surprising that, in a time like this, any man could so far forget his duty to his country as to make a party platform paramount to the peace, happiness, and prosperity of the American people? Sir, have we not fallen upon strange times? It does seem to me that "madness rules the hour." I have been taught to believe that the preservation of this glorious Union, with its broad flag waving over us as the shield for our protection on land and on sea, is paramount to all the parties and platforms that ever have or can exist. I would, to-day, if I had the power, sink my own party, and every other one, with all their platforms, into the vortex of ruin, without heaving a sigh or shedding a tear, to save the Union, or even stop the revolution where it is. Sir, when I heard my colleague (Mr. FARNSWORTH) say, in his speech, that he would not deviate one "jot or tittle" from the principles of the platform upon which he was elected, I thought that the insanity of these times were enough to appall the civilized world. He should remember the inducements that were held out to the people during the last canvass in order to induce them to adopt his platform of principles. They were told that the way to bring peace and quiet was to give his party the supremacy and control, and agitation on the slavery question would seek its hiding place; that the dark caverns of the earth would have to be searched to find a disunionist; that the Union would be bound in ties stronger together, and would last forever; that order would reign where confusion existed; that tyranny and oppression would be driven into the deep abyss of infamy, and such an era of peace, prosperity, and happiness, would be inaugurated at once, as had no parallel in the history of the world. The majority of the northern people believed you. I did not. I thought you were mistaken in the temper of the times. Now, instead of peace, acts of war are proposed; instead of quiet we have confusion; instead of ceasing the slavery agitation, the same old abolition harangues are heard day after day in this hall; instead of hunting in caverns for disunionists, we have them all over the land; for prosperity we have adversity; for happiness we have misery and want; instead of Union we have disunion, with all other ills almost that can befall a people; and certainly my colleague, in view of all these things, should be willing to yield a "jot or tittle," of his views, when he sees that he has been so much mistaken.

Mr. Speaker, what sacrifices would any of us have to make, to settle this question, more than any fair minded man would make at any time, to settle a dispute with his neighbor? The question of abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia by Congress, without the consent of Virginia or Maryland, or both, is one point of apprehension on the part of the South. Republicans say they do not intend to abolish or interfere with it, and, therefore, it would do no good to the South to act in reference to that matter. If you do not intend to do it, why not put it in the bond at once? Why not give the guarantee? It will not do to say it will do no

good. *It will do good.* It will satisfy all apprehensions on this point forever. And if you mean to live up to what you say, it will do you no harm, unless you think it necessary to keep this as an open question for "stump ammunition."

Another ground of apprehension is, as you all know, that you, by some means, will attempt to effect the emancipation of the slaves in some or all of the States, at some future day. You say that you do not intend any such thing, and that there is no just ground for any such apprehension. Whether there is or not, is not the question. But, does the apprehension exist? You have been told that it does, by members upon this floor, who are good and true men. Then, if you do not intend any such thing, why not put that in the bond also; not to stay *your* hands particularly, but so that nobody can interfere with the institution in the States that may now or hereafter have the power in Congress. You say that you are prohibited already from such interference by the present Constitution. That is true. I think you are; and if you are, surely, to incorporate a provision declaring explicitly the fact, can do you no harm. It will satisfy the South on that point. Another ground of apprehension is, that you will interpose obstructions to the *inter-State* slave trade; to that, also, you respond that you will not; then certainly you can easily settle these questions, and do away with the apprehension on all these subjects; and *I would be sorry if it should interfere with the principles upon which you were elected*, so that it would cause the *great leaders* to withhold their votes and defeat the propositions.

Having thus disposed of three questions, I propose to examine, for a short time, the territorial question; and see if that cannot be disposed of, so as to allow those conscientious Republican leaders, who make their platform both their Constitution and Bible, without interfering particularly with their cherished object, the exclusion of slavery. They say, that all the Territories belonging to the United States must be forever kept free, and that they will not give up that point in their platform. Now, sir, if we will reason coolly about this matter, we will find that there is no necessity for such determination on their part, in order to protect the soil of the Territories from slavery. It has been said on this floor, by Republicans, that the God of nature has so arranged the soil and climate of those Territories that slavery cannot go there; and, therefore, they are determined to keep them from its blighting influence. Why, sir, if by the soil and climate slavery is excluded from the Territories, in God's name, why insist on this impracticable legislation by Congress? The South insist on their right to go to the Territories on perfect equality with us, as they expended for them as much as we did, both in blood and treasure. You say they shall not take their property with them. The Supreme Court, the highest tribunal in the land, says they may, and that it is unconstitutional for you to prohibit them. Still, in the face of all this, you say they shall be excluded. I do not suppose really, that the southern people desire to go to any of the terri-

tories with slaves, as their labor would not be profitable there; but it is the denial of a right under the Constitution, as affirmed by the Supreme Court, that annoys and chafes them. Will your party, sir, insist on adhering to their policy on this subject, when the Union is crumbling beneath their feet, merely to irritate and annoy the people of the southern States?

Mr. Speaker, there is another point of view in which to look at this question, to show that the Republicans ought not to stickle on account of their fears about the spread of slavery in the territories. It is the character of the population that settle them. They know well the fact that our western territories are settled first by the hardy and enterprising "yankees" of New England, who generally take possession of all the good lands, town sites, and mill seats; next comes the northern and western men, who are inured to toil and hardships, and who have been taught from their infancy to believe, that slavery is not best calculated to develop the resources of a country. The people from foreign climes—England, Ireland, Scotland and Germany—come, too, and make their homes in the far west. They have the strongest prejudices against the institution. But, it is said that southern men will go there also. That is true. But, sir, what class of the southern people go to make new territories their home? Is it the rich planter with his slaves? No, sir; it is generally the poor laboring men of the south, who leave slave States to get rid of the institution, and not with a view to establish it. This, then, is the kind of population that settle our territories, and it certainly cannot be expected that such a population will establish slavery, when the soil and climate are adverse to its existence. Why, then, sir, should the Republican party, or any of them, determine to adhere to their platform on this subject, when slavery will be entirely excluded from all the territories by soil, climate, and population? There is no sense or reason in it; it is a mere determination to carry out a party policy, even if it wrecks this proud fabric of ours.

Now, sir, as my time is but short, having discussed the questions that mostly irritate the country, in my feeble manner, I desire to notice for a short time some of the propositions presented to this House, with a view of adjusting our difficulties. There are a great many of them. And it does seem to me that, out of so many, we could, if there was any disposition to do so, agree on some one of them, which would be a just basis of settlement, and that would satisfy the conservative and Union-loving men both north and south. You cannot get a proposition that will satisfy the *mulmen* either south or north, and to undertake it is a labor of love that I shall not perform. To undertake the discussion of the merits of the various propositions before the House, would occupy more time than what is now left me. They are all entitled to consideration. We have the propositions of Senators Crittenden and Douglas, the proposition of the committee of thirty-three, (a committee upon which, I am sorry to say, the one million and a half of northern Democrats had no voice,) the border States proposi-



tion, the proposition of my friend and colleague from Illinois, (Mr. McCLEARNAND,) the proposition of my colleague, (Mr. KELLOG,) and one from Mr. Morris, of Pennsylvania. These propositions all differ somewhat in reference to the territorial question. I am willing to give my support to either of them, believing that in a crisis like this no man should expect his views alone to be incorporated in any measure of peace. I cannot say, however, that many of these propositions, on the question of the territories alone, could receive my sanction under any other circumstances. Although I shall cheerfully give my support to any of them, for the reasons I have stated, I must say, sir, that the proposition of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, I believe to be the fairest one which has been submitted to the House. He proposes that neither Congress nor a territorial legislature, shall interfere with slavery in the territories at all; but leaves the people, when they come to form their State constitution, to determine the question for themselves. I think this is the best proposition, because it is a fair concession on all sides. The Republicans give up their congressional intervention, those who are styled "squatter sovereigns" give up their territorial legislative policy, and the southern protectionists give up their protection intervention policy; thus every party yields something. With this proposition as an article in the Constitution, it would satisfy every conservative man in this Union, both north and south, I do seriously and honestly believe. Having indicated my preference of these propositions, and my reasons for that preference, I have said all I desire to on the point, except to repeat again, that I will willingly vote for any of them, or make any other sacrifice necessary to save this Union. It makes no kind of difference to me what the sacrifice, if it will save my country, I am ready to make it.

I would ask of these gentlemen, who are opposed to concession or compromise and in favor of war for the subjugation of these revolting States, if it would not be better for us all, North and South, to adjust our difficulties in a proper spirit on some *just basis*; banish the slavery agitation from the halls of Congress forever, avoid war, bloodshed and the horrors of civil strife, and once more give peace to a distracted country. Let them refuse this, let this Congress adjourn without adjusting these difficulties or submitting them to the people for their action, and I envy not the position of *any* gentleman in this House or the other end of the Capitol who has or may interpose obstructions. Go home before your people—when asked by them "do you believe the country could have been saved by making proper concessions at the proper time?" "I do." Why then did you not make them? "*Because it would have violated the platform upon which I was elected.*" My God! is there a man on earth who would dare to meet a Union loving constituency and make such an answer? Will you turn a deaf ear to the appeals of such Union men of the South as Bouligny of Louisiana, Hamilton of Texas, Harris and Millson of Virginia, Harris of Maryland, Stokes and other of his col-

leagues of Tennessee, and a host of others from the border slave States, who implore you to act promptly in presenting to the country some pacific measures; as a rallying point for the conservative masses in their States, whereby they may be saved from the very jaws of secession and revolution? What can they say? To an apprehensive and excited people on their return home, they must say: "We appealed to the dominant party of the North in Congress, to pour oil upon the troubled waters," and "they would not;" "we asked them for bread," and they gave us "a stone;" we asked "for a fish," and they "gave us a serpent; we asked for conciliation, and they tendered us war and subjugation."

Sir, these men are acting as a band of noble Spartans standing in the breach, attempting to turn back the tide of revolution that is sweeping over the land. We should act in such a manner as to strengthen their hands, that they may war against it more successfully. But to you gallant Union men of the South, who are standing against a fierce and bitter storm, if nothing be done to calm it, and you are hurled over the precipice into the deep yawning gulf of disunion, for your heroic stand in this fearful crisis, history will immortalize your names, your children will read with illuminated countenances the faithful sketch of your patriotic devotion to your country. And to you, gentlemen, who are not willing to make any sacrifice in this hour of our country's peril, history will give to you an immortality also, but it will be an immortality of infamy—your epitaphs will be written thus: "The men who would not sacrifice party prejudice to save their country."

Sir, I care not how loudly gentlemen may talk of their love of liberty and the preservation of our institutions: he who will, at this time, sit quietly down and see the ruin of his country consummated without being willing to assist in saving it by peaceful means, if it can be done, has disunion rankling in his very heart, and is as much opposed to the Government as those who have drawn the sword to stab it in the most vital part. There are some in this hall that are almost ready to strike the party fetters from their limbs and assist in measures of peace; halt not, take the step, be independent and free at once; let us overcome party passion and error, allow virtue and good sense in this fatal hour to be triumphant; let us invoke Deity to interpose and prepare the way for our country's escape from the perils by which we are now surrounded; and, in view of our present greatness and future prospects, our magnificent and growing cities, our many institutions of learning, our once happy and prosperous people, our fruitful fields and golden harvests, our enjoyment of all civil and religious blessings, let parties die, that these be preserved, such noble acts of patriotism and concession on your part, would cause posterity to render them illustrious and pause to contemplate the magnitude of the events with which they were connected. You are told, however, that none of the border slave States will secede,

and therefore, "it is not necessary for anything to be done as the other States have already gone and will not return," be not deceived by such assurances, unless the bonds that bind the border States to us are strengthened now. They will sooner or later bid us farewell and take up their abode where congeniality of institutions will make their interests strongest; one by one they will leave; and if this disintegration should progress much further, what assurances have we that the States on the Pacific will not soon become restless, and thus, as time wears on, our Government may go to pieces, different interests will still be taken advantage of to cause disloyalty. Military chieftains will arise, and in the night of our sorrow the "manacles of military despots may be fastened upon our limbs, and will gleam in our temple when freedom's shield lies pierced and broken." Great God! shall these things be? Sir, what shall I say to my gallant constituents when I return to them? Shall I bear the ill tidings that nothing has been done in Congress to give them a ray of hope for the future of our country? Must I tell those gallant Tennesseans, Kentuckians, and men from different southern States, that, ere long, if they should desire to visit the soil of their nativity, they must be prepared to visit a foreign and, perhaps, hostile Government? Shall I say to the sons of gallant old Virginia (the mother of our own State) that it is highly probable that, very soon, if they want to visit the soil where their fathers and mothers, the man who wrote the Declaration of Independence, the one who drafted the Constitution, and the one who, with our poor and half-starved armies, drove the British from our land, signed the Constitution, and was our first President, all lie buried; that they will at some future day have the opportunity, with a passport in their pockets, or, in certain events, they can do so with a torch in one hand and a sword in the other? No! no! let me not bear this sad intelligence. In the name of the patriotic sires who breasted the storms and vicissitudes of the Revolution, by all the kindred ties of this country; in the name of the many battles fought for our freedom; in behalf of the young and the old; in behalf of the arts and sciences, civilization, peace, order, christianity and humanity. I appeal to you to strike from your limbs the chains that bind them, come forth from that loathsome prison (*party caucus*) and in this hour, the most gloomy and disheartening to the lovers of free institutions that has ever existed during our country's history, arouse the drooping spirits of our countrymen by putting forth your good strong arms to assist in steadying the rocking pillars of the mightiest Republic that has ever had an existence.

Mr. Speaker, a word or two more and I am done. Revolution stalks over the land. States have rebelled against the Constituted authorities of the Union, and now stand, sword in hand, prepared to vindicate their new nationality; others are preparing to take a similar position; rapidly transpiring events are crowding on us with fearful velocity; soon circumstances may force us in

an unnatural strife, in which the hand of brother shall be uplifted against brother, and father against son. My God, what a spectacle! If all the evil and calamities that have ever happened since the world began could be gathered in one great catastrophe, its horrors could not eclipse, in their frightful proportions, the drama that impends over us. Whether this black cloud that drapes in mourning the whole political heavens, shall break forth in all its frightful intensity, and make Christendom weep at the terrible atrocities that will be enacted, or, whether it will disappear, and the sky resume its wonted serenity, and the whole earth be irradiated by the genial sunshine of peace once more are the alternatives which this Congress, in my judgment, have the power to select between. (Applause in the galleries.)





